



Natural Resources Conservation Service
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*Helping People
Help the Land*

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Transmitted via Email

February 3, 2006

MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 300-6-16

SUBJECT: LTP – EQIP SIGN-UP STATUS AND TIMELINE

ACTIONS DUE BY: As Identified

Purpose. To provide information and timelines for 2006 EQIP.

Expiration Date. September 30, 2006.

January 31, 2006, was the cut-off for accepting EQIP applications to be scored and ranked for potential funding. As of February 2, there were over 1,600 applications entered, statewide, into Protracts. In 2005, Minnesota funded 1,441 contracts. At this time, it is unclear whether sufficient applications have been received to fully utilize Minnesota's \$25.1 million available funds. If unobligated funds remain, a second, very short ranking period will be held. As per EQIP policy (440-CPM-515.80), applications should always be accepted on a continuing basis throughout the year.

Offices should proceed with the following steps:

1. Finish entering all applications into Protracts and upload plans. We are continuing to have problems with practice MN252 (formerly 752) Environmental Quality Assessment, being accepted in Toolkit. Applications with that practice will not be able to upload a plan until this is fixed.
2. **Have all applications entered in Protracts by February 10, 2006.**
3. Once all applications are in Protracts, continue with scoring and ranking applications. Select applications for potential contracts and change their status in Protracts to 'Approved'. The national goal is to have all 'Approved' applications selected and recorded in Protracts by March 15, 2006. Based on the level of approved applications, NHQ may then reallocate surplus EQIP dollars between states.
4. **Select and record as 'Approved' applications for your county by March 1, 2006.**
5. Proceed to 'Sign Contract' for approved applications when the plan development is complete. The national goal is to have all EQIP contracts signed and obligated in Protracts by June 1, 2006.
6. **Complete and record 'Signed Contracts' in Protracts by May 15, 2006. Funds not obligated to a signed contract by this date will be reallocated either to the next ranked application or to another county.**

The state office will continue to monitor the entered applications, Approved applications, and Signed Contracts in Protracts to ensure adequate progress toward the national goals. These earlier Minnesota deadlines will allow time for dollars to be reallocated statewide as needed. ASTC(FO)'s should continue to administer EQIP funds in their areas, reallocate funds as needed, ensure PRS goals are being considered, and keep the state office informed of their status.

Questions should be directed to your Assistant State Conservationist (FO) or through the Area to Tim Koehler, Assistant State Conservationist (O).

/s/

WILLIAM HUNT
State Conservationist

DIST: ASTC (FO)
DC
ARC
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